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THE PRESENT STATE

OF

THE EDUCATION CONTROVERSY

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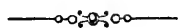
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THE EDUCATION CONTROVERSY.*



WE are all in the habit of saying that nothing would astonish one-half the world more utterly than the revelation of how the other half has to live. The remark is a true one, and it admits of a wider application. It is true also with reference to the contemporary movements of our own time, to those national institutions which have been growing up alongside of us all our lives, but of whose magnitude the public is never conscious until circumstances startle us into its recognition. Something of the kind may be said with regard to our existing provisions for national education. For here, although as a matter of public controversy everybody is more or less familiar with the name, yet, as regards the thing, it may well be doubted whether its real and overshadowing magnitude has ever yet been truly

* 1. *Report of the Committee of Council on Education (England and Wales), with Appendix, 1874-5.* Presented to both Houses of Parliament by command of Her Majesty.

2. *The Cost of Voluntary Schools and of Board Schools.* By Robert Gregory, M.A., Canon of St. Paul's, Treasurer of the National Society, Member of the London School Board.

3. *Is the Canadian System of Education Rates possible in England?* By the same.

realized by the public imagination. It is a hurrying and an inattentive age. Even public men give but a spasmodic and intermittent attention to what lies outside their beat; so that, in spite of all our boasted self-government, it is perfectly possible for a huge system to take root among us, while nine-tenths of the so-called educated classes have still to realize its existence.

Another remark may be made, and although it is one which may excite a smile, yet no truer thing could ever be said than this,—that no class of literature makes so great a demand upon your imagination as a Government Blue-book. History, poetry, biography, all these, if written as they should be, are so written as to help and stimulate that realizing faculty which we call the imagination. It is just the reverse with Blue-books. They are the very cemeteries of facts. It is not only that the facts and figures are buried. Too often they lie there, not merely buried, but so dead that it is only the liveliest imagination that can conjure up before the mind the living things which those cold stiff figures tell of. Yet when a person will bring sufficient vigour of imagination to bear upon it, few things can be more full of startling life and fact than the Blue-book we have named at the head of the present article. Let us look into it a little, and see if we can make these dry bones live.

To begin with, then. In all matters of education the fundamental things are the teachers and the taught. What is the existing force of the teaching

power now at work on the young England of the so-called labouring-classes? It is a perfect army. Set aside all the minor makeshifts of dame-schools and whatever else may linger here or there of a subsidiary character, and you have a force of more than *twenty thousand* (exact figures 20,162) *certificated* teachers in those elementary schools, which are under Government inspection. But these are the chief teachers only, and they are aided by *two thousand* assistant teachers, and over *twenty-seven thousand* (exact figures 1,999 and 27,321) apprentices or pupil-teachers.* In other words, there were *twenty-two thousand* adult and *twenty-seven thousand* juvenile or apprenticed teachers, engaged in teaching the three R's and certain extra subjects, on December 31, 1874. Allowing for the natural increase of the last twelve months, it is not too much to say that at this actual moment this number must be put at something over *fifty thousand*. So much for the numbers of the teaching staff. It is, as we said, a perfect army, with its 'Horse Guards' at the Privy Council Office. Let us now look to its quality. Of the *twenty thousand* principal teachers just two-thirds had been specially educated for their work in the Training Colleges. These Training Colleges are *forty* in number. At the actual moment they have *three thousand* (exact figures 2,975) students in residence; and thus† the annual supply of drilled and trained recruits—*i.e.* of trained

* These figures are for December 31, 1874, the latest date for which the Government Reports are made up.

† The period of training being two years.

masters and mistresses, poured forth to recruit the great army of teachers—is not less than fifteen hundred. The existing number of undergraduates at Oxford may be taken roughly at *two thousand five hundred*, who reside at least *three* years. Hence our system of Training Colleges is educating a number of teachers larger than the whole body of Oxford undergraduates, while the numbers which ‘go out’ annually with their ‘certificates’ will nearly equal the whole body of young gentlemen who go out as B.A.’s from both Oxford and Cambridge put together. Such, then, is the existing state of things ; and the point we have reached marks the work of exactly a generation. It is just six-and-thirty years since the first Training College was opened. It is exactly thirty years since the first of Dr. Kay-Shuttleworth’s newly-invented pupil-teachers was apprenticed. It was just about the same time that the first Government examination for certificates of competency was held. Since these beginnings a whole generation has gone by, and now our certificated teachers are equal in number to the whole English clergy, and the aggregate of our Training College students are more in number than the undergraduates of either Oxford or Cambridge. Thus much, then, for the teachers ; now for the taught.

The Registrar-General puts the number of the children who ought to be in our public elementary schools at *three millions and a quarter*. Now in the year 1874 there were upon our school registers exactly *two millions and a half*, just a trifle over three-quarters the total number we ought to have to

make our school children include all who ought to be under teaching. In other words, we have brought our system up to three-quarters of what it should be. How long should we have been bringing it to completeness? It is curious to observe that exactly half of our existing provision has been furnished during the last ten years. During the years 1865-1875 the number of children on the books has doubled. In 1865 it was one million and a quarter; in 1875 it was two millions and a half. The number of schools and of teachers have all but exactly doubled likewise. Schools for one hundred and twenty-five thousand children have been built annually. *Eight hundred and thirty* certificated teachers have been added annually to our teaching staff. If, therefore, the rate of progress of the last ten years were maintained, six more years would see all arrears overtaken, and a complete supply of schools and teachers adequate for the whole population provided. This is the first significant fact which strikes us.

For a moment we must turn to the money aspect of the business; and, keeping still to our one point of exhibiting the state of things at the actual moment, we may name that the average stipend of the certificated teacher is 107*l.* for masters and 64*l.* for mistresses. Exactly half the masters earn over 100*l.* a year, and half less than 100*l.* a year, while *two hundred and eighty* receive over 200*l.* a year. Half of the masters and one-third of the mistresses have house or rooms rent-free as well. The returns include the salaries of just *seventeen thousand five hun-*

dred certificated teachers, whose aggregate stipends reach just a million and a half sterling. Add in the unreturned stipends of the remainder, of the two thousand assistant teachers, and the twenty-seven thousand pupil-teachers, which a moderate estimate would put at 600,000*l.* a year, and you have the total cost of our teaching staff at not less than *two millions one hundred thousand pounds*—half the gross endowment of the National Church.

In all this we are considering only schools under Government inspection, and a word must then be added upon that inspection system which presides over these schools, which watches the teachers, and which examines the taught. The Blue-book whence we are drawing all this information positively revels in arithmetical particulars; and with the list of its *eighty-four* inspectors it gives also the most elaborate account of how these inspectors spend their days, the number of children they examine, the number of miles they travel, and so on. Certainly the inspectors are themselves inspected;—*nulla dies sine lineâ* is their rule;—so many days spent in examining schools, so many days in correspondence, &c. &c. There are not less than eleven separate columns for as many classes of duty, while one column is set apart for ‘Visits of Surprise,’ it being part of an inspector’s duty to pay *unexpected* visits to schools, and see how they are going on when no foreign eye is looked for within their walls. It is amusing to know that *eight hundred and fifty* of our schools were thus pounced upon during the year ending December 31, 1874.

One desperately 'surprising' inspector actually managed to pay seventy-four of these angels' visits, a second fifty-eight, a third fifty-three; but the majority did not reach anything like this height of zeal. Two very locomotive inspectors travelled seven thousand miles apiece, while the whole staff of eighty-four accomplished over 350,000 miles among them; and the cost to the country of all its inspectorial service amounted to 83,483*l*. An occasional touch of fun brightens the dulness of the Reports which these gentlemen send in. It is only natural that writing from our point of view we should keep a sharp look-out for cases of the 'religious difficulty,' but our watchfulness seemed doomed to disappointment, when at last we thought we had secured a case. It was in connection with the Cowley Fathers' School near Oxford. Fancy our surprise and amusement when the solitary instance turned out to be that of a mother refusing, on conscientious grounds, to allow her boy to learn Cowper's *John Gilpin*, to be recited before the inspector! The woman was 'a Good Templar,' or something of that sort, and refused to allow her son to learn anything about a man who 'loved liquor.' So the boy could not be presented in the extra subject, and the managers lost the grant which would have been earned if he had passed. 'In another part of my district,' says Mr. Pickard, 'Scott's *Lady of the Lake* was objected to as having an immoral tendency!' Perhaps the most frequently recurring remark is on the failure of the Agricultural Children's Act; not

that the Act itself is amiss, but that there is little or no provision for enforcing it. One inspector suggests that the inspectors should be authorized to prosecute under it—a suggestion in which we do not think he would find many of his brother inspectors to second him.

But to come back to serious matters. We have already observed that, taking account of schools under Government inspection alone, more than three-fourths of all the children who ought to be under instruction are already on our school registers, and that at the existing annual rate of progress another six years would see the 'system' adequately developed to satisfy the need of the whole population. It is time that we should begin to show something of the exertion and sacrifice, by which the present state of things has been attained, and to whom these exertions are due. It is, we consider, high time that a distinct and compact statement should be made—a statement well within the mark as to facts, but still in some degree approaching completeness—(1) of the long, steady, persistent work of the Church of England in the cause of education up to the present time ;—(2) next, of the proportion of the education field occupied by her at the actual moment, and the cost at which she occupies it ; and then—(3, and lastly), of the nature and operation of the new Board system, by which it is sought to supplant her, to filch away her schools, and to render those very schools, which she has raised to be a bulwark to religion, subservient to a system which she believes to be both dangerous

and mistaken. Under this last head we shall also have something to say on the enormous expensiveness of the Board system, as compared with the voluntary agency of the Church, and the extreme inexpediency of exchanging an economical system for a very costly one, without the slightest advantage in point of efficiency; on the oppressive unfairness of the Board system, and likewise on the very real unfairness with which the Church has been treated under the Act of 1870. In doing this we shall have to ask our readers' patience while we travel back, for a short space, over the history of Church effort and Church energy—effort and energy which were up and doing long ere that secular zeal which is now so noisy had begun to wake.

Now, taking account only of schools *actually inspected* during the year ended August 31, 1874, we find that, including both those visited for annual grants and for single inspection only, the following are the facts:—

	Number of Departments*	Accommodating Children	Number of Certificated Teachers	Amount of Parliamentary Grant to Day Schools	Rate per Scholar on average Attendance
Church Schools .	14,526	1,963,694	13,282	£ 689,636	s. 12 d. 4
British, Wesleyan, &c.	3,117	570,525	2,995	204,498	12 8
Roman Catholic .	1,021	180,843	1,025	62,212	12 4 $\frac{3}{4}$
Board Schools .	1,423	247,924	1,562	75,261	10 10 $\frac{1}{2}$
	20,087	2,962,986	18,864	1,031,607	12 3 $\frac{1}{2}$

* A 'department' means a school under a separate teacher, whether or not there be another school under the same roof. A boys' school, a

In the foregoing Table we present our readers with the most important items of the General Summary given on p. 3 of the Blue-book, to which we have referred. It will be seen that it shows the proportion of the ground occupied by the Church of England, the Protestant Nonconformist bodies, the Roman Catholics, and the new Board system. One glance at any of these columns will show at once how entirely the lion's share of work has fallen to the Church of England. She carries more than two-thirds of the schools. She has more than two-thirds of the school accommodation. She employs more than two-thirds of the certificated teachers. She earns more than two-thirds of the Parliamentary grants, which are meted out according to 'Results.' Turning to those institutions in which the future teachers are trained, *i.e.* the Training Colleges, it is curious to see how exactly the same proportion is maintained. The number of students in training in the year 1875 is returned as follows (p. xvii.) :—

	Male	Female	Total
Church of England Colleges . . .	972	1,079	2,051
British " . . .	190	242	432
Wesleyan " . . .	131	105	236
Congregational " . . .	24	25	49
Roman Catholic " . . .	45	163	208
Total	1,362	1,614	2,976

girls' school, and an infant school, are often all under one roof, though taught by separate and independent teachers. In that case, as each is really a separate school, it is here called a 'department.'

Thus, then, out of *less* than three thousand teachers under training, *more* than two thousand are in the Training Colleges of the Church. We may therefore consider it as amply proved that of the existing educational work done throughout the country, certified as efficient by the authority of Government inspectors, the Church is actually doing more than two-thirds, and this irrespective of all Church schools not in connection with the Government.

Then arises the further question—*How* is she doing it? And here there is one advantage, which we derive from the present system of ‘payment by results,’ namely, that the Parliamentary grants being awarded by Government officials after examination of individual pupils, we have an impartial authority to appeal to. Well then, the rate per scholar in average attendance in Church of England schools is 12s. 4d. per head, as against 10s. 10½d. in the new Board schools. That it is slightly higher in the Dissenting and Roman Catholic schools is easy to account for. It arises from the circumstance that in our schools every effort is made to draw in the poorest and least promising pupils, and who are consequently, in a paying point of view, the least remunerative, as earning the smallest amount of the Government grants.

It is not to be supposed that Church people have been able to do all this amount of work for nothing. It has been at a huge cost of voluntary subscriptions that all this service has been rendered to the State.

Going back to the year 1811, since which date we are in possession of the means of judging, we find that the very smallest estimate* of the amount of voluntary expenditure on school-building on the part of Church people between 1811 and December 31, 1873, has been *twelve millions sterling*, while the corresponding amount spent on the maintenance of schools during the same period has been at least *fifteen millions*. The two sums together amount to *twenty-seven millions*, which sum may therefore be taken as approximating to the amount of the voluntary contributions of Church people towards the elementary education of the poorer classes up to the end of 1874. From what a comparatively small number of persons this large sum has been derived was most effectually pointed out in the Report of the Royal Commission

* We write this advisedly, and the estimate is made as follows. The cost of a very large part of the schools is ascertainable with accuracy, inasmuch as they were aided by Government building grants. Presuming then that the remainder were erected at the same average cost, we shall arrive at a reasonable approximation.

Now, from 1839 to December 31, 1873, Church schools were built for 1,023,746 children, with Government help, at a total cost of 5,550,960*l.*

But the *total* Church school accommodation in connection with Government, in August 1874, was 1,963,694*l.* Let x = total cost of building. Then we have the following proportion:—

$$\text{As } 1,023,746 : 1,963,694 :: 5,550,960 : x.$$

Therefore x , *i.e.* the total outlay on Church schools in connection with Government will be 10,647,541*l.* From this deduct the portion of the cost contributed by Government, namely 1,472,351*l.*, and we have 9,175,190*l.* as the amount spent by Church people on elementary schools in connection with Government alone. Add all the outlay on schools *not* in connection with Government, remembering that during all the long years from 1811 to 1839 Government building grants were unknown; add also the outlay on Training Colleges, and an estimate of 12,000,000*l.* is surely far within the mark.

on Education of some fifteen years ago. How large an amount of voluntary taxation Church people are still submitting to in this behalf may be seen from the fact that the amount of voluntary subscriptions to Church Schools actually inspected in the year 1874 was 470,376*l.*, contributed by 194,021 individuals. But even this large sum by no means represents the full total, inasmuch as, referring only to schools actually inspected in the year, it leaves out all cases where the inspection was postponed, it leaves out all schools visited for simple inspection, amounting to no fewer than 888, with voluntary subscriptions returned at 12,138*l.*, and it leaves out all cases of schools not in connection with Government at all. The annual voluntary contributions to school maintenance from Church people cannot be set down at less than *half a million*:—no small sum saved to the taxation of the country.

The point then at which we have now arrived is this—that Church people have set on foot more than two-thirds of the existing educational work of the country, at a cost to themselves during the last sixty years of *twenty-seven millions* sterling, and that their annual contributions towards the maintenance of the schools thus founded exceeds *half a million*. A Chancellor of the Exchequer will appreciate the magnitude of these figures, when he remembers that the gross amount expended by Government on education, from 1839 to March 31, 1874, was short of *fifteen millions* (exact figures 14,630,678*l.*). Surely after this it is not too much to say that, with such a zeal as is here

shown to fall back on, the area yet remaining to be occupied would ere long be brought within the influence of education, if the Church were encouraged instead of discouraged.*

In 1870, however, as our readers well know, an interference was made, of which as yet we are only beginning to see the results. It was a time of political effervescence. In October 1865 Lord Palmerston had died, within a few days of eighty-one. With his decease the long political calm which he had managed to preserve broke up, and after one or two

* It may not be amiss here to put on record the actual figures, which will exhibit the growth and expansion of voluntary effort in education.

In 1837 the number of children in Church day schools was 558,180.

In 1847 this number had risen to 955,585.

These figures are taken from the Statistical Inquiries instituted by the National Society.

Up to the year 1850-51 the Government Reports give no statistics; but with that year their statistical tables begin, and thus we are enabled to show the way in which the Church has steadily endeavoured to work with the State in this matter of education. Of course the figures below refer only to schools *under Government inspection*, and it must never be forgotten that, as above stated, the Church had *nearly a million* day scholars in her schools as far back as 1847. Hence the rapid increase in the numbers does not mean that those children were not previously under education, but only (in numberless instances) that the schools were then for the first time brought under Government inspection.

Year ending	School Accommodation		Average Attendance in	
	All Voluntary Schools	Church Schools only	All Voluntary Schools	Church Schools only
October 31, 1850 .	383,984	296,086	205,347	157,690
August 31, 1855 .	704,495	544,957	447,007	347,257
August 31, 1861 .	1,182,019	886,322	753,444	561,219
August 31, 1866 .	1,465,203	1,102,558	863,420	650,764
August 31, 1870 .	1,883,584	1,365,080	1,201,690	882,432
August 31, 1874 .	2,715,062	1,963,694	1,553,973	1,124,532

changes of Ministry Mr. Gladstone came into power in December 1868. The great body of the Liberals, no longer held in check by Lord Palmerston, felt that now at last their hour was come, and that everything was to be made over again. This was especially the case with the political Dissenters, and they, long jealous of the work which Church people had been doing in education, were bent on such legislative changes as should check their further progress, if not deprive them of what they had already done. Of this movement Birmingham was the head-quarters; and the published speeches and pamphlets of the promoters of the Birmingham League left no doubt of the object which was in view. The most exaggerated statements were made both as to the inefficiency of existing schools, and as to the area left yet untouched by educational appliances, while all deficiencies were freely attributed to the paralyzing influence of clerical interference. The autumn of 1869 was spent in desperate efforts to rouse the country against the influence of the Church in education; and that, be it observed, by a school of politicians which had made neither sacrifices nor exertions in behalf of education, and which only proposed to supplant the Church at the expense of other people and by the power of rates. It was the ambition—most certainly a noble ambition—of Mr. Gladstone's Government, to settle this controversy. It was its aim to do two things: first, to settle this controversy by a general and comprehensive measure which should stand on a broad basis and be truly national; next, to provide at the same time for

the more rapid advance of education throughout the country and to complete the work which as yet was only in progress. There can be no doubt of the honesty of purpose with which Mr. Forster's Bill was introduced, or of his desire to be fair to all parties concerned. At the same time it was equally impossible to doubt the *animus* of the party which was clamouring for rates, for undenominationalism, and for compulsion. The general result is known to all. A Bill was passed by which the Government—*i.e.* the Education Department—was empowered to inquire into the quantity and the quality of the means of education throughout the country; and wherever a deficiency was reported it was to compel the formation of a locally-elected School-board, which must supply the need at the cost of local rates. This of course involved both the building of new schools where needed and their maintenance when built. It also naturally involved the cessation of the hitherto existing grants in aid of school-building, since this was now to be thrown upon the local rates. But in order to enable those neighbourhoods which preferred the voluntary system to remain independent of the rates, the Government granted an interval of a year before that cessation, so as to give time for the localities to provide whatever deficiency there was in their accommodation upon the old system.

Of course the proposal of local rating, with its correlative of local management by local Boards, was intensely unsatisfactory to Church people. This was the way, it was said, to make the religious difficulty,

hitherto so visionary, an intolerable reality. Every School-board, and every School-board election, would become a scene of party strife. And that, too, just at the moment when, for the sake of peace, Church people had not been so very unwilling to give up church-rates. It really looked as if school-rates were being invented for the very purpose of keeping such strife alive. Still, in spite of these obvious objections, there was an evident desire to be fair. The original Bill, as proposed by Mr. Forster, was far less unfair to existing voluntary schools than the Act as ultimately passed. At all events, it did not seem to aim at their extinction, by leaving them to be sustained entirely by voluntary effort, while the very persons who subscribed to them are simultaneously rated for the support of the rival Board schools. The original Bill contained the following clause:—

‘A School-board may in their discretion grant pecuniary assistance, of such amount and for such purposes as they shall think fit, to such public elementary schools in their district not provided with them as are willing to receive it, provided that such assistance is provided on equal terms to all such schools upon conditions to be approved by the Education Department.’

This clause was carefully struck out of the Act as amended and passed, even though a few pounds laid out in keeping a voluntary school alive might save hundreds to the ratepayers!

Again, in the original Bill there was *nothing to exclude* definite religious teaching from the new Board schools. It was of course an obvious objection that a Board elected by ratepayers was not the kind of

authority one would like to intrust with the control of the religious teaching in a school. Still it was always possible that a Board might have a majority of Church people on it, and at all events there was no limitation placed on the discretion and free-will of the Board. As amended, however, and *as passed*, the Bill assumes a positively anti-Church character, and the Boards are carefully *prevented* from dealing fairly by any religious body. This was owing to the introduction of the now famous Cowper-Temple clause, and the Act provides that—

‘Every School provided by a School-board shall be conducted under the control and management of such Board, in accordance with the following regulations :—

‘1. The school shall be a public elementary school within the meaning of this Act.

‘2. *No religious catechism or religious formulary which is distinctive of any particular denomination shall be taught in the school.*’

The clause is Mr. Cowper-Temple’s, but its *motif* is all in the interest of the Birmingham League. At first sight it reads fairly enough, and seems to apply to all alike. But a moment’s consideration shows that its operation is anything but just and equal. For, in the first place, while it prohibits all distinctive religious teaching, it does not necessarily enjoin any. We may divide the country, roughly, into three main sections :—1. Those who have a definite creed, as the Church and the Romanists.—2. Those who concur upon the general platform of the British and Foreign School Society.—3. Those who are distinctly and definitely Secularists, and

with whom the *exclusion* of all religion stands in the same position as 'dogma' does with a Churchman. Of these three the first are by far the most numerous, they are, as we have shown, by far the most zealous in education, from them come by far the larger portion of the rates. A political combination between two and three, however, has for the time overbalanced them. For look how this clause acts. It leaves a Secularist (No. 3) Board free to follow its peculiar tenet by excluding all religion, even though the majority of the pupils may be children of Church people, and thus it may tyrannize over the consciences of the majority; but it prohibits a Board of Churchmen (No. 1) from ordering the Creed or the Catechism to be taught at all, even to Churchmen's children, even though all other children in the school be protected by a conscience clause, or even though *all the children are children of Church people*. The only party which it can possibly suit is No. 2, which believes in Bible reading, provided only that it is not explained in any 'distinctive' sense—*i.e.* in opposition to its own views. But even this middle party may be subjected, as it is in the case of Birmingham, to the will of a Secularist majority. The upshot, then, is this: the Secularists may have their way to the full if they can command a majority upon a Board; so, also, may the undenominationalists of the British and Foreign type; but so may not the Church people, under any circumstances whatever. Church people may be in a majority on the Board, they

may pay nine-tenths of the rates, the parents of every child in the school may wish it otherwise, and yet the utmost that is allowed them is what we say. Irony itself could not be more bitterly ironical than this irony of legislative Liberalism.

Thus, then, it will be seen that the Bill, as introduced by Mr. Gladstone's ministry, was a very different thing from the Act which received the Royal assent, and under which we have now been living for five long years. The Bill, as introduced, may be described as a *bonâ fide* attempt to hasten the time when our educational system should cover the whole country, to compel every one to take his share of the burden, and to do this with as much respect for existing efforts and for the rights of conscience as the case would admit. All this might honestly be alleged on behalf of the Bill. The Act, as altered, can no longer pretend to any character of impartiality. As regards existing schools, it practically forces the new Board schools into competition with them, which the original Bill in no way contemplated. As regards the rights of conscience, it treats Church people as of no account. Add to this, that it is an Act of tremendous force and swiftness, and one peculiarly calculated to carry out the views of those who supported the amendments almost before the general public was aware of what was going on. It seems to us that this last point, the enormous force or momentum of the Act, has scarcely received the attention it deserves. The powers of the Boards are so extensive, their

capacity for immediate action is so great, their power of forestalling—subject, of course, to the central authority in Downing Street—the resources of their district so large, that if only the Act had been promoted by a Government of different party politics, one could imagine any amount of outcry to be raised. And with these amendments all this enormous force was capable of being concentrated on the effort to swamp the existing schools, to leave the Board system in sole possession of the ground, and thus, by one strong effort, to place the whole primary education of the country on (at the best) an undenominational footing. It is, we conceive, of no small importance to call attention to this. It is important out of sheer justice to Mr. Gladstone's Government and to Mr. Forster. They asked for immense powers, and immense powers were given them. But they did not ask those powers for the further purposes to which, *as it left the House*, the Act can hardly help working. They asked for those powers in the interest of education, viewed simply *as education*, and unencumbered with any special conditions as to the religious element therein. By the Act those powers were applied to the furtherance, not of education pure and simple, but of education under the special restriction, that whereas it might be totally secular, or at most undenominational, under no conceivable circumstances might it be according to the formulæ of the Church of England, or of any Church whatever. Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Forster

asked for those large powers with a view simply to the extension of education where hitherto it had not reached, and without any hostile side-glance at existing agencies. Naturally, therefore, they included at least an opening for friendly co-operation with existing schools, to which many might prefer still to resort. That provision was banished from the Act as it passed from Parliament, and now it is not merely possible to work Board schools in antagonism to the neighbouring Church schools, but the difficulty would be to avoid the antagonism. As introduced, the Bill was simply for the furtherance of education. As passed, the Act may further a certain sort of education, but it adds to this two elements which the Bill never contemplated; it adds a definite violation of the consciences of Church people; it adds also a heavy blow to that vast system of voluntary schools under which, as we have shown above, we have already covered nearly three-fourths of the field of national education. The proportion of the children in Board schools (see Table on page 11) is so moderate as not to affect this calculation.

For all this it was not Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Forster that were primarily answerable. It was the excited majority in the House of Commons, driven on by the Birmingham League, who for the moment had the game in their own hands, and used their opportunity with all their might. In denouncing these interpolations in the Act, we are not denouncing the work of statesmen, but simply exposing the action of a determined and energetic faction.

It has been with no small satisfaction, then, that even while we write, the immediate author of the Bill has had to speak upon the subject in the Scottish metropolis, and has expressed himself still of the same opinion as he was before his Bill was made the receptacle for the cuckoo's egg from Birmingham. Speaking at Edinburgh on November 6, 1875, Mr. Forster said—

‘This is a difficult question, and I am not going to dwell upon it. There was the question of what was to be done in regard to religious teaching. There were different opinions on that point, I think, in Scotland as in England, as I have known very well. However, I must say that, whether our principle be good or bad, we took it in a good deal from Scotland. *I mean your principle of having in the day-school religious teaching, and by the schoolmaster, with the power that the teaching be decided according to the majority of the parents, with the power to any parent who did not like it, to withdraw his child from that particular teaching. And whether it be good or bad, I am one of those obstinate people who still think it was the best.*’

Mr. Forster therefore remains of opinion that the exclusion of that religious teaching, which long experience has shown to be *not* obnoxious to the great majority of Englishmen, is not an advantage to his Bill, but a departure from it which he regrets.

Next, with respect to the second alteration in the Bill. We have shown that, as originally drawn, the Bill empowered the Boards to aid voluntary schools from the rates, so as to prevent the one being crushed out by the other. This, of course, would never suit the views of the League. Accordingly it had to be abandoned. But Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues saw clearly enough its drift, and accordingly Mr.

Gladstone proposed what he considered would be an equivalent. He proposed, that in consideration of the increased difficulty in maintaining voluntary schools which the new system would bring about, their grant in aid from the Committee of Privy Council should be increased 50 per cent. Mr. Gladstone's plan was therefore to increase Parliamentary subsidy to all schools, and therefore also to Church schools, in preference to throwing Church schools upon the rates. Speaking on June 16, 1870, he said—

‘We think that an addition to the present grant from the Privy Council to the voluntary schools, which may be taken at its maximum at 50 per cent., would fully accomplish that object. . . .

‘We propose that local Boards shall cease to have any connection with or relation to voluntary schools, and that these voluntary schools, so far as they have depended on public aid, shall only stand in relation to the Privy Council; we propose that the contribution of the Privy Council towards the annual charge of schools shall be augmented in such a manner as to afford an increased amount of support to the local schools, whether voluntary or rated. That increase or amount of support would vary in detail according to the different heads under which it would be given. It is not necessary for me to refer to them separately; but the augmentation would be within a maximum of fifty per cent. It might not be so much; but taking it at about that amount, I think, if our propositions be acceded to, we may fairly require the promoters of voluntary schools to supply from their own resources and the pence of the children what with the grant from the Exchequer will enable them perfectly well to stand in competition with the rate-schools.’

Not one word then need we add to show that the unfair pressure alike upon conscience and on purse to which Church people have been subjected

was never contemplated by the Ministry, but was extorted from them by a section which was acting in avowed and internecine hostility to the Church. But it is needful to remark that Mr. Gladstone's well-intended measure of relief has proved illusory. It is true that this has not come about through any fault of his, but through the action of subsequent circumstances. Still the fact remains: and consequently the difficulty of our 'standing well in competition with the rate-schools' remains undiminished; as a matter of fact it has been enormously increased. See how the figures stand.

Mr. Gladstone's anticipation that voluntary schools would be exposed to disadvantageous competition has been fully realized. His intentions for their assistance have not been realized at all. Taking the cost per child in the voluntary schools in the year 1870, when the Act was passed, and in the year 1874, after it has had four years to work, the comparison stands as under :—

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Cost per child in 1874	1	10	10½			
Ditto 1870	1	5	5			
			<hr/>			
Increase in COST per child	0	5	5½	0	5	5½

Now for the increased subsidy under Mr. Gladstone's plan :—

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Government grant per child in 1874	0	12	4			
Ditto 1870	0	9	9¼			
			<hr/>			
Increase in AID per child	0	2	6¾	0	2	6¾
			<hr/>			
Balance <i>against</i>	0	2	10¾			

In other words, whereas Mr. Gladstone intended his additional grant to put the voluntary schools in a better condition to meet the competition of the rate-schools, it has *not even left them in as good a position as they were*. For, first of all, the grant is raised, not by 50 per cent., but only by 26·22 per cent.; and next, the increased expenses are *more than double* the increased grant. Hence the managers of Church schools have not merely to stand the competition of the rate-schools, but they have also to find 2s. 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. more per child than they had before. Is it wonderful that they should complain? For this 2s. 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. per child, when we are talking of children by the million, means tens of thousands of pounds more to be raised in subscriptions, and that in countless cases from persons who are, all the time, being also rated to support the Board schools which are stifling their own. The fact is, that in the voluntary schools the subscriptions have had to rise from 418,839*l.* in 1870 to 602,837*l.* in 1874;* an increase of 183,998*l.*; while the number of subscribers has risen in the same period from 188,985 in 1870 to 236,306 in 1874, an increase of 47,321 annual subscribers; and of this *six hundred thousand* a year of annual subscriptions, all but *half a million*, or five-sixths, is spent in Church schools.

The statements we have already made of the extent to which Church people have been, and are, prepared to subsidize the education of the country

* Report, p. 21. This includes all voluntary subscriptions to all schools of whatever denomination.

are sufficiently striking, but the picture would be incomplete did we omit to set before our readers the magnitude of the special exertions made since the Act of 1870. The unfairness of that Act we have already shown. The *added* cost which it has imposed on the maintenance of pre-existent schools we have set forth. Yet for all that Church people have striven to meet the case and have added enormously to their educational operations under these exceptionally hostile circumstances.

First, as to *service rendered* to the educational system of the country. The Blue-books give us the following comparison between the school accommodation of 1870 and 1874; referring to schools in receipt of annual grants only:—

	Accommodation		Increase provided	
	Aug. 31, 1870	Aug. 31, 1874		
Church of England	1,365,080	1,889,236	524,156	} 469,086
British, Wesleyan, &c.	411,948	557,883	145,935	
Roman Catholic	101,557	179,199	77,643	
Board Schools	—	245,508	245,508	
	1,878,584	2,871,826	993,242	

These figures show that while all the other religious bodies, and the School-boards to boot, added only 469,086 school-places to the educational provision of the country, the Church, handicapped as she is, added no fewer than 524,156, and that in schools certified as efficient and in the receipt of

annual grants. The attendance returns tell exactly the same story, namely, that while the average attendance in all other schools (including rate-schools) had increased by 253,243, that in the schools of the Church had grown by 273,127. The actual work done therefore by the Church during the last four years towards completing the educational apparatus of the country has been more than double that done by all other agencies put together, including that of the enormously costly School-boards themselves.

Turning next to the pecuniary outlay, we find, from the present Blue-book, that the amount subscribed by Church people for building and enlarging schools receiving grants for the same object was—

	£
In the year ending December 31, 1870 .	101,897
" " 1871 .	120,417
" " 1872 .	367,226
" " 1873 .	347,580
" " 1874 .	145,863
	1,082,983

And this, be it remembered, is *exclusive* of the large but unascertained sums spent in enlarging schools without Government aid. Then as to *maintenance*, the same Reports show that the gross annual subscriptions to Church schools in the same period was 1,987,979*l.*, so that the gross sum contributed by Church people to the education of the country *in connection with the Government system* was over THREE MILLIONS (exact figures 3,070,062*l.*).

The amount spent in buildings in the same

period by all other religious bodies put together was 120,979*l.*, and in maintenance 558,857*l.*; giving a total of 679,836*l.* as against the *three millions* aforesaid.

Such, then, is the existing state of things; such the Church's readiness to meet the nation's needs, and that too, be it further noticed, not on terms of the Church's making, but *in the nation's way*, for all these schools are conformed to regulations imposed by the State, not made by the Church. And there is, as we have shown, but about a quarter of the ground yet to be covered. Surely, were any stranger, untouched by English party prejudices, to observe the situation, he would say, 'Let well alone; and be thankful that you have such a mass of voluntary zeal to bear the nation's burdens.' Surely, such a visitant would expect to find such serviceable munificence petted and fostered; or at least met with some amount of public acknowledgment. Or should this be lacking, he would at least expect a financial people to appreciate the convenience of a private liberality which delights in spending its money in lightening the public taxes. Instead of this, what would he find to be the case? Why, he would find the country rushing headlong into unknown expenses, first to crush out this system, and then to replace it by one of infinitely greater cost, and that too, as we thoroughly believe, with a very moderate amount of information as to what it is doing.

We have already described the inception of the

rate-school system, which as yet has done so little but spend money. We shall spend no space in feeble complainings over the unfair way in which it has been worked, seeking to draw away children from existing schools, rather than to carry education where as yet it was lacking. All this is true enough: it is too true: but it has been done by others, and to others we will leave it. We cannot say it is to be wondered at. We know the real origin of those provisions for unfairness which were foisted into the original Bill. The engine is but working, as it was meant to work, by those who slipped their egg into the nest. But what we do wonder at is the quiet way in which John Bull is allowing *his* pockets to pay for objects which are none of his. It is absurd to say that the nation at large wants the Church schools to be squeezed out of existence. It is absurd to say that the nation at large is in love with Secularism, or that it cares to have mere British-and-Foreign-ism forced upon schools which are raised and maintained by Church people. Yet for all this John Bull is already being made to pay, and pay enormously, for the mere beginnings of the new arrangement. And, what is still more to the point, if he does not promptly take the alarm, the *doctrinaires*, who have brought things to their present pass, will shortly have saddled him with the *permanent cost* of the whole country's education. It is marvellous to see how the machinery of popular government can be worked so as to elude popular cognizance of what is going on. Here, in this

matter of education, it was perhaps easier than usual. Up to 1870 the national education had been left pretty much to those who really cared about it, aided by not very overwhelming annual grants, seldom exceeding some 800,000*l.* *Now those who really cared about it were very few.* It was only the clergy and those whom they persuaded to subscribe to the schools. The whole number of subscribers, Church people, Dissenters, Roman Catholics, all told, was but 200,000. How many of these really cared about it, or understood the details of the question? Perhaps five-and-twenty per cent. Certainly not more. A mere handful out of the whole country. People at large took things as they came; they presumed that the people got educated somehow; that Government had something to do with it, they did not exactly know what; and when the new Act came in they took it as another of the many changes they had heard of without scrutinizing the details. But that Act contained provisions for getting prompt hold of people's purses to found new schools with. And then, besides that, if it once succeeded in supplanting the voluntary schools, it would have saddled the nation with the cost of maintenance, which had previously been paid for by the two hundred thousand subscribers, and not that only, but at an enormously increased scale of expense. It is absurd to suppose that the people at large understood this. A few people did, but they could get no hearing. There was a fever of excitement abroad, not to say intoxication. The co
is coming on now, and though an immense a

has been done before the people were cool enough to hear reason, the matter is as yet only half carried through, and it may be stopped before it is too late.

In school work, as in railways and other undertakings, you have two accounts. There is the capital account and there is the account for maintenance and working expenses. As to the first, the Act empowered the Boards, subject to the sanction of the Education Department, to pledge the rates for fifty years a-head for money to build schools with. We wonder how many British taxpayers were aware six months ago—we say *six months ago*, for now the cold fit is coming on and John Bull is beginning to look at his accounts—that already up to date 1874—a *year ago*—this pledging system had gone to the extent of over four millions. There is a delicious freshness about the way in which ‘My Lords’ relate the achievements of these precious Boards, promising children as they are of the Act of 1870:—

‘III.—The School-boards have availed themselves freely of the power of borrowing on the security of the rates given by the Acts of 1870 and 1875. We have recommended to the Public Works Loan Commissioners to make 986 loans, amounting to 4,179,173*l.* 19*s.* 3*d.* to 502 School-boards, by means of which new accommodation will be provided for 370,956 scholars. We have before us a considerable number of applications for similar assistance from various parts of the country, in which new schools are required.’

We don't doubt it. And when one knows the different way in which public money is spent, from that in which the hardly won money of private

individuals is laid out,* it is easy to imagine the satisfaction which must have been diffused in the districts, where these loans have had to be spent. However, let that pass. Here is a pretty good round sum in the way of debt incurred up to 1874, which John Bull will have to be paying off for the next fifty years, and how much greater it is by this time we do not know. But up to the date of the last Report there were 1,434 Boards besides the monster London Board.

Of course if a capital outlay of some four or five millions would really do what is wanted and start

* No better illustration of this can be given than the following return of the building expenses of the various Boards. The reader must bear in mind that the corresponding average building cost in the case of the voluntary schools has been but little more than 5*l.* 10*s.* :—

RETURN of the Estimated Cost of School-Buildings per Child accommodated in the Towns named, ordered by the House of Commons June 7, 1875. No. 247.

Town	Cost per Child					
	Buildings (only)			Site and Buildings		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
London	10	7	9 $\frac{1}{2}$	15	7	2 $\frac{1}{2}$
Liverpool	10	9	3 $\frac{3}{4}$	12	10	0 $\frac{1}{2}$
Manchester	9	11	2 $\frac{3}{4}$	13	2	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
Birmingham	9	4	0 $\frac{1}{4}$	11	9	11 $\frac{1}{4}$
Bristol	6	13	6 $\frac{1}{4}$	7	15	0 $\frac{3}{4}$
Newcastle	11	5	8	12	13	2 $\frac{1}{2}$
Sheffield	7	19	2	9	14	2 $\frac{1}{2}$
Leeds	9	5	1 $\frac{1}{4}$	11	0	11 $\frac{1}{2}$
Brighton	8	15	11 $\frac{3}{4}$	12	3	8 $\frac{3}{4}$
Bradford	17	7	10 $\frac{3}{4}$	22	14	0
Huddersfield	10	9	9 $\frac{1}{4}$	12	16	0
Leicester	7	15	4	9	19	0 $\frac{3}{4}$
Halifax	9	18	6 $\frac{3}{4}$	11	16	0 $\frac{3}{4}$
Nottingham	7	16	6 $\frac{1}{4}$	9	12	10

the country fair upon a career of real and satisfactory education, no patriotic mind would grumble. But *this is only a beginning*. The Report contemplates (see p. xv.) an ultimate total of 30,000 separate departments* as against 17,646 at the existing moment. As far as we can gather, the amount of additional school accommodation thus contemplated will be about one million places. If school-places for 370,956 scholars require loans to the amount of 4,179,173*l.*, this remaining number, if made up by the action of School-boards, will require loans to upwards of *eleven millions*. These figures will give some idea of the way in which the capital account is likely to roll up. It is in a vigorous youth already at its present stage of between four and five millions of debt. What it may have come to in four or five years more we do not venture to conjecture. One thing only is certain—that, if the debt is once incurred, it will all have to be paid out of the rates, and very unpopular will the School-boards become as the rate-payers begin to realize it.

But though this capital account is bad enough, it is not all, nor anything like it. There is the maintenance to be thought about. And here perhaps the inherent expensiveness of public, as contrasted with personal, management comes out most strongly. It has come out already, and even the London School-board is beginning to feel the pressure from without of murmuring rate-payers. Mr. Peek's speech of

* See the explanation of this word in a previous note.

December 15 shows this. It is no wonder. In 1870, as we have already mentioned, the average cost per child was 1*l.* 5*s.* 5*d.* For 1876 the London School-board's *estimate* was 2*l.* 1*s.* 0*d.* How far it is likely to keep it *down* to this may be inferred from the fact that for the last quarter it was at the rate of 2*l.* 8*s.* 0*d.* per annum. Now this is not only killing as regards voluntary schools, whose expenses are forced up in proportion, but it is also killing as regards the Boards and their system. It is all very well as long as the London Board has comparatively but a moderate number of schools to carry on, upon this lavish scale, but look what it would cost supposing the Board should starve out the other schools and have to occupy the whole ground by itself? Its success would be its ruin, for the rates would become unbearable.

Or, to leave London and to take the case of Brighton, about which Canon Gregory's pamphlet gives some useful particulars. Here, omitting fractions, the annual *balance* per child falling upon the rates is 1*l.* 12*s.* 4*d.* That is, after deducting (1) the children's pence, and (2) the Government grants, there is still an amount of 1*l.* 12*s.* 4*d.* per child to be provided out of the rates. But in the voluntary schools of Brighton the corresponding amount which has to be made up by the voluntary subscriptions of their supporters is only 5*s.* 4½*d.** What it comes to then is, that if the Brighton School-board succeed in becoming

* The comparison here made is between voluntary schools with

predominant, if it starves out the voluntary schools, and gets all the children to itself, this 1*l.* 12*s.* 4*d.* alone will want a rate of 10½*d.* in the pound, to say nothing of the cost of buildings and interest on loans, whereas, at the rate of cost in the voluntary schools, all the children in Brighton would only want a rate of 1¾*d.* in the pound, and no loans to pay off. But some one will say,—Do not the Boards give a better article for the money?—*i.e.* a better education? Not so: the Government payments ‘by results’ being witness. Alike in London and in Brighton the result of the Government examinations is that the children in voluntary schools earn larger grants than those in the Board schools. In the Brighton schools, the Government grant earned in the voluntary schools is 14*s.* 1½*d.* per child, as against 9*s.* 6⅓*d.* per child in the Board schools: an excess very largely in favour of the voluntary schools. Taking all England

average attendance of 1,474, and Board schools with average attendance of 2,229. And the figures stand thus:—

Voluntary Schools.

	£.	s.	d.
Children's Pence	0	9	9·87
Government Grant	0	14	1·58
To be made up by Subscriptions	0	5	4·26
Total cost of Education per Child	1	9	3·71

Board Schools.

Children's Pence	0	8	0·35
Government Grant	0	9	6·63
To be made up by Rates	1	12	3·93
Total cost of Education	2	9	10·61

In the 2*l.* 9*s.* 10·61*d.* only such expenses as fall under the head of maintenance and management are included.

into account, the Blue-book, so often referred to, gives the following as the average result for the year ended August 31, 1874:—

Grant per Scholar in Average Attendance.

	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
Church of England schools	12	4
British, Wesleyan, &c. schools	12	8
Roman Catholic schools	12	4 $\frac{3}{4}$
Board schools	10	10 $\frac{1}{2}$

And remember how much the average in the Church schools is pulled down by the small schools in rural districts, and by the effort everywhere made in our parochial schools to sweep in the poorest and least promising pupils. As yet the London Board (at least) does not seem disposed to weigh down its schools with those poor children who want education most, although we are always told that it was this object which justified the Act of 1870. At all events, Canon Gregory's pamphlet calls attention to the fact that the London Board *rejected* a motion pledging it to make it its first duty to provide for the educational wants of the poorest and the lowest. His motion ran as follows:—

‘In all circumstances it shall be recognized as the primary duty of the School-board to secure school provision for the poorest children in every neighbourhood for which there is an insufficient supply of school accommodation.’

This motion was *rejected* by twenty-three votes against seven, on January 20, 1875.

Of course a good deal of this extraordinary costliness of the rate-schools must arise from 'cost of management,' which in the case of voluntary schools is furnished gratis by the voluntary exertions of the School Committees. We had imagined that it might have arisen from lavish salaries to teachers. But on turning to the Blue-book, where salaries of teachers are given (p. 6) we find the following for the year ended August 31, 1874:—

	Certificated Masters		
	Average Gross Stipend	Number provided with House rent-free	Number on which Average is taken
Church schools . .	£. s. d. 101 3 10	3,674	5,937
Board schools . .	113 18 4	144	676

Here we must remember (1) that in the *Church* average we include the vast number of small rural schools where salaries are low, and that there are *very* few Board schools of this class; and (2) that the value of the 'house rent-free' is *not* thrown into the 'gross stipend.' Since therefore we find so many more Church teachers housed than is the case with the Board schoolmasters, it is clear that there is little or no difference in their emoluments. It is obvious, then, that the managers of Church schools *do not* make their savings by stinting teachers' stipends. It would be strange indeed if they did, seeing that the standard of proficiency is what we have seen. The saving must be somewhere else—not in anything

connected with efficiency, not even in respect of the higher branches of education above the level of the three R's. For here again, to our surprise, on turning to the 'Passes in Extra Subjects,' as compared with the number of children in attendance (see Blue-book, p. 15), we found:—

	Passes in Extra Subjects	Average attendance
Church schools	58,858	1,117,461
Board schools	3,602	138,293

Now if the same *proportion* of passes had been attained in the Board schools there would have been about 7,100 instead of 3,602. The extra expensiveness, therefore, of the Board schools cannot be accounted for either on the score of efficiency or of paying their teachers more highly. The natural inference is, that—to say the least—a good deal of it must arise from the cost of management, and a good deal more, also, from the very different *sort* of management you get when managers are spending money which in good part is their own, and when they are drawing it wholesale from the pockets of rate-payers.

Yet for all this—and we may say *the more* for all this—the competition of the voluntary schools with those of the Board is becoming harder and harder. It is only natural that people should object to *carry double*; on the one hand to pay heavy rates, on the other to pay increasing subscriptions. It was bad

enough in our great Napoleonic war to have to subsidize the armies of Europe. English tax-payers would have shown a still greater impatience of taxation, if they had had to keep Napoleon's armies on foot as well, for the unprofitable amusement of protracting the conflict they were paying for on the other side too. Yet something of this kind is what we are having to do. And we have the added vexation of feeling,—1. That no such thing was intended by the framers of the Bill, but that it has been foisted in by the 'cuteness of a faction momentarily in the ascendant. 2. That the country in no way *desires* the suppression of religious teaching, which the triumph of the rate-schools will ensure. 3. That should our Church schools succumb, it will be just for want of a little more doggedness at the last, inasmuch as the cost of the rate-schools must ere long disgust the public at large, and the voluntary schools once more receive their meed of appreciation.

But it is high time that the public attention was called to it. The huge masses of money already made away with by the loan system, of which we have spoken, are of course past recall. But we need not let them go on to be trebled or quadrupled. Neither need we let the Boards swell out our rates still further by getting possession of the ground now occupied by our voluntary schools. The rate-payers must be taught that *every voluntary school kept on foot is so much saved to the rates*. They will be taught it soon enough by the visits of the rate-collector, if we give up our schools. But we want to

save our schools, and therefore we would teach the public, *before* they learn by actual experience, that it would pay them far better to give our schools a handsome subsidy to keep them going rather than let them fall away into the custody of their Boards. Look at Brighton, where every Board-school scholar costs the rate-payers 1*l.* 12*s.* 4*d.* Suppose all the Church schools crushed. All that the rate-payers would gain would be the pleasure of paying so many more multiples of 1*l.* 12*s.* 4*d.* And what for? In the interest of conscience? Why, as it is, no child can be taught anything against the parents' wish in the Churchiest of Church schools. Or is it that the children may be better taught? Not so, for we have already shown that the Church schools beat the Board schools. It is simply that the Birmingham League may have the pleasure of knowing that so many more of the children of Church people are forced into schools where they may not learn their own Church catechism. John Bull is often caught napping, but the time of waking comes. We cannot think the British rate-payer will much longer be content to pull these chestnuts out of the fire, to spare the fingers of the Secularist who sits concealed behind him.

But, as we said before, there is no time for Church people to lose. It may yet be a year or two before rate-payers feel the smart enough to make them move energetically to throw off the old man of the sea who is seated on their shoulders. Within that year or two many Church schools may have

succumbed. It is for us to rouse the country to the state of the case *before* we have lost our schools, and while we are still in a position to undertake the lion's share of the country's education if we are allowed. It is so still. A year or two more and our position may be altered; and a Chancellor of the Exchequer besieged by angry rate-payers clamouring for imperial relief from local burdens may sigh in vain for the huge subsidy which used to accrue from the voluntary subscribers to the absorbed Church schools—a subsidy large as measured by mere cash, but infinitely larger when measured by the far larger sum which it would cost the country if it had to do the work itself.

What then is our counsel to our fellow-Churchmen? Our counsel is—hold on to the last; for certainly the time for relief cannot be delayed much longer, and any failure on our own part now may be irretrievable. Out of 408 parishes in England with School-boards there were 249 whose rates were above 3*d.*, and no fewer than 89 above 6*d.* in the £. At Staplehurst and Queensborough they reached 16*d.*, at Chesterfield 10*d.* It is not likely that so costly a system can long endure. So far as things have gone at present, we find that up to April 1875 Church schools, to the number of 187, having accommodation for 30,900 children, had been transferred to Boards. We hope that the mischief may be arrested; for let our friends consider what all this means. The barest money value* of the property thus surren-

* Calculating on the basis of 5*l.* 8*s.* 6*d.*, being the cost of school-building per child. See Blue-book, Appendix 1. Table 3.

dered cannot be under 170,000*l.*, without counting the teachers' residences. Of course every school *surrendered* by the Church is so much capital, not merely sacrificed, but made over to the other side to be used against us.* It is like losing a seat in the House of Commons : it counts two on a division. Therefore, in any case where managers are *absolutely* unable to hold out, they should be very careful not to part with their freehold, but only to *let* their premises to the Board ; and that for as short a term as possible, so as to admit of recovery when better times arrive. It should also be retained by

* On the hopelessness of supplying efficient religious teaching in Board schools, even of the shadowy character permitted by the Act of 1870, Bishop Ryan's testimony is explicit. Bishop Ryan was formerly Principal of the Cheltenham Training Colleges, and is now Vicar of Bradford. Speaking at Liverpool, June 26, 1875, he said :—

'On the practicability of using Board schools for religious instruction, I can only give the result of my experience as member of the Bradford School-board for the last four years and a half. That experience leads me to the conviction that it is not practicable in Board schools to give efficient religious instruction. In the first place, no clergyman has the right to give a sentence of such instruction. . . . This fact ought, in my judgment, effectually to prevent the transfer of a single Church of England school to the Board, except under circumstances of dire necessity.

'Then, again, on the principle at present adopted in the schools belonging to the Board with which I am acquainted, the instruction can only be given by the head teacher in each department. The effect of this will readily be imagined.

'But there is one element of danger and instability about all Board-school arrangements, which is this:—That such arrangements depend on the result of triennial elections, and therefore the regulations of next year may be entirely different from those now in force.'—(Quoted in a pamphlet by the Rev. B. F. Smith, Inspector of Church Schools in the diocese of Canterbury, and entitled, 'Why hand over the Church School to a School-Board?' Price 6*d.* This pamphlet should be read everywhere, and may be had at the National Society's Office.)

the managers for use on Sundays and other times in the week when not actually occupied by the Board.* But the thing to do is to hold out to the last. Those country clergy, who really attend to their schools, have little notion how large a service they are rendering, not only to individual children, but to their Church and country. We write from a long observation, and time has shown abundantly how it is the abler and more enterprising of the rural population who leave their native parishes and are probably seen no more by their parish priest. But such lads carry with them *into the towns* the lessons of their boyhood, and are the salt of life in many an unsuspected quarter. Therefore let no country clergyman say, 'Mine is but a little rural school ; it cannot count for much.' He little knows for how much it may *not* count. We write thus about rural schools because of observing *where* it is that the Boards have been most successful in absorbing Church schools. Of the 187 cases above mentioned *one-ninth*, *i.e.* 22, are in Devon and Cornwall ; Norfolk follows with 16 ; Surrey counts for 10, Kent and Staffordshire for 9 each, York and Sussex each for 8, and others make up half the number.

But, in the meantime, what kind of relief are we to press for ? And how shall the mischief be remedied ? Various schemes have been proposed. It has been proposed to fall back on the original clause and allow voluntary schools a share in the

* On all details of this kind managers should write to the Secretary, National Society's Office, Broad Sanctuary, Westminster, S.W.

rates, *if the Board so pleases*. It has been proposed that subscribers to voluntary schools should be excused their rates to the amount of their subscriptions.* It has been proposed that rate-payers should have the power of allocating their rates to schools of this or that denomination should they prefer it. The Canadian system has been vigorously urged by several, including notably the Church's best head for finance, Canon Gregory. For our own part, we earnestly wish all these proposals to be canvassed, and canvassed thoroughly. But by far the most important matter at the moment is to press home upon public men the extraordinary impolicy of suffering the voluntary schools to be crushed out of existence; and the certainty of a very serious reaction if by any misfortune the Board system with its attendant costliness should approach universality. The State has a willing partner in the persons of the two hundred and fifty thousand subscribers to voluntary schools. They and those who feel with them are ready to do all, or very nearly all, that these

* We were astonished the other day to see Mr. Forster sneering at this proposal, and comparing it to a claim for exemption from poor-rates on the ground of alms given to a beggar in the street. The comparison is as misleading as the sneer is unworthy of the speaker. A voluntary school is under Government inspection and certified as efficient just as much as the Board school, and may be quite as worthy of support—*teste* the Government's own inspector. Therefore money so spent is spent under Government supervision. Can the same be said of money given to the casual beggar as compared with the poor-rates? Again, the subscription to the voluntary school *saves the rates* from the strain we have described, and positively saves more than its own amount. We never heard of casual alms saving poor-rates. Mr. Forster does not often make these slips.

obnoxious rates are called into existence to do. *Why* should the State throw all this away? And we cannot repeat too often that this was not the intention of the Bill. A Government which shall hark back from the present position of things is *not* receding from a position of its own or any previous Government. It will only be correcting a twist given to the Act by a clever faction, which never did anything for education, but only wanted to get their narrow views carried out and paid for at the cost of others.

We are very willing, therefore, to leave the question of 'how' to general discussion. Where there's a will there's a way. But, if our judgment goes for anything, we would say to Church people and the managers of Church schools—in whatever form the relief is given, keep clear of the rates if you can. Mr. Gladstone's *instinct* was right when he proposed the 50 per cent. of increased grants mentioned a few pages back, in place of the rate aid originally intended by Mr. Forster. Mr. Gladstone's instinct was right. It has been only through circumstances unlooked for that the particular provision has been rendered (as we have explained) nugatory. Let larger *Imperial* aid be given to the voluntary schools, to whatever extent may be decided on to keep them afloat, and so relieve the local rates from further pressure. This we believe to be the true policy alike of the State and of the Church. As regards the State, it will be a wise thing to relieve local burdens by central expenditure, and since the State will not give a shilling except according to 'results' certified by

its own officers, no one can say the money is given for nothing. As regards the Church, it will be but the extension of a method already known and tried, and it will save us the risk and the trouble of a new experiment. Moreover, it will keep our local managers of schools *off the rates*, and to our thinking this is decisive. We should not of course look too closely in the mouth of any gift-horse, but if the choice were given us between the method contemplated by Mr. Peek's resolution of last month and an equal or even a larger amount raised by the rates, we should unhesitatingly go with Mr. Peek. Rates are unsavoury, *foenum habent*; let us keep off them if we can. And now we must close this long article. Gladly would we have said much on the moral aspect of the case, of the infinitely greater humanizing efficacy of schools which enlist the care and sympathy of educated men and women, as our Church schools do, as compared with the mechanical agency of the rate-supported school where master and scholars are left to mechanical routine and that alone. The three R's, with all the extra subjects in the world, are, after all, but the materials of education. It is the mingling of class with class, the mutual good understanding between high and low, of which the foundations (at least) are laid in our parish schools, that is a truer and more valuable *education* than all the book-learning that can be attained. The rate system sweeps this away, and on this ground alone it deserves a patriot's reprobation. It is the separation of classes which is the great danger of our modern civilization. The danger must

be encountered, for it is in the nature of things. But though it cannot be avoided, it may be overcome. It is the Church's office to save civilization from this as well as its other dangers. One great engine is education. By infusing the spirit of human interest and human kindness into our primary education, we may at least pave the way for a tolerable mutual understanding between high and low, rich and poor, as those children grow up who now are our scholars in our elementary schools. At least we may do something towards weakening that tendency to suspect and dislike all who are better off, which is the *fomes* on which the revolutionist counts, and which the agitator stirs. Let the rate-school become universal, and it will pave the way for England to become more than ever a divided house,—Two Nations, as Mr. Disraeli once said, only too truly,—and it will render education a loosening and not a uniting influence. It is in the interest of our common civilization, it is in the interest of the England of the future, it is not merely as Churchmen of the actual moment, but as politicians and as patriots, that we deprecate with all conceivable earnestness the extinction of our voluntary schools.

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